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CHFS Focus Employee Spotlight: Michael A. Fields, Undersecretary for Human Services

Michael A. Fields, 56, enjoys his position as the Cabinet for Health and Family Services Undersecretary for Human Services for many reasons, not the least of which is the opportunity to apply his life's philosophy on a daily basis.



"When I leave work every day, I like to think I've made a difference in someone's life," Fields said. Making a positive difference in the lives of the people he serves and the people with whom he works is a professional ambition and personal value Fields credits his parents with instilling in him.

"The two people who had the greatest influence in my life, like most people, were my parents," Fields said. "From my dad I inherited his work ethic and from my mom I learned to have respect for others, to treat others with dignity because we all have value."

As the Undersecretary for Human Services, Fields directs and oversees operations of Department for Disability Determination Services, the Office of the Ombudsman and the Department for Human Support Services which includes the Kentucky Commission on Community Volunteerism and Service, the Division of Aging Services, the Division of Child Abuse and Domestic Violence Services, the Division of Women's Physical and Mental Health and the Family Resource and Youth Services Centers.

Fields served as deputy commissioner of the Department for Community Based Services from December 2002 until his appointment as Undersecretary for Human Services in 2004. He was the executive director for the Housing Authority of Frankfort from 1980 until 2000 and previously held positions with the state Division of Real Properties, the state Department of Transportation and the River Region Mental Health and Mental Retardation Board.

A Frankfort native, Fields holds a bachelor's degree in sociology and a master's of public administration degree in counseling and personnel, both from Kentucky State University.

In announcing Fields' appointment, Cabinet Secretary James W. Holsinger Jr. said Fields' breadth of experience in public service made him an ideal choice to lead so diverse an array of agencies. He said Fields possesses the skills and credentials to provide "steady, experienced and

compassionate leadership to services essential to the health and well-being of Kentuckians of all ages."

When asked what he most enjoys doing during his leisure time, Fields said, "Just give me a hammer and I'm happy." He likes to unwind from his cabinet duties by renovating old houses and wood working. Fields is currently in the process of renovating a 130-year-old Victorian house in South Frankfort.

He enjoys R&B and classical music and his favorite movie is Top Gun.

Fields is the proud father of two daughters, Tiffany Thompson, a teacher in Charlottesville, VA and Alexandria Fields, a recent University of Kentucky graduate who works as a nurse at the Frankfort Regional Medical Center.

CHFS Focus Program Spotlight: OIT's Division for User Support

By Pam Fries

When your computer goes down and you have one hour to make your deadline, who ya gonna call?

The HELP DESK, aka the User Management Branch, of course. One of two branches in the Division for User Support, they're the ones who take all incoming technology service or help requests. They speak calmly, then take control of your computer and fix the problem. And if they can't fix it, they tell you who can.

User Management Branch staff also maintain security systems, create user accounts, request e-mail accounts, request installations of data communication lines and routers, and reconcile the bills.

Desktop Support Branch staff install and maintain servers, hubs, desktops, laptops, printers, software and applications - and they come right to your desk to do most of it. Need more memory? How about an upgrade for TWIST or another application? These are the folks to call.

Desktop Support Branch staff also maintain the Office of Information Technology hardware and software inventory.

If, on a rare occasion, you don't get immediate attention, think about this: The Division for User Support maintains the technology infrastructure of the cabinet's approximately 11,000 users. This includes supporting desktop technology and helping support cabinet network operations.

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In others words, there are 57 of them and 11,000 of us throughout the state.

Give them chocolate.

Secretary's Forums for February postponed

By Anya Armes Weber

The Secretary's Forums scheduled for Feb. 22-25 have been postponed.

Because of the legislative session, this month's forums will be rescheduled for March.

Secretary James Holsinger will include an update of the session in next month's forums.

Keep reading the CHFS Focus for newly scheduled times and dates.

Videos of the November forum have been distributed to regional offices.

Leadership wants to remind staff to attend the forums to give feedback about cabinet activities. But the forums aren't the only way to keep the lines of communication open.

Between forums, your supervisors should have an open door policy for you to share your concerns and respond to them. Let your voice be heard.

Information on JOBS for Kentucky tax modernization plan available online

Kentuckians can now log on to <http://governor.ky.gov> to find out more details on Governor Ernie Fletcher's JOBS For Kentucky tax modernization plan. The site also offers a tax calculator to allow Kentuckians to determine how the plan would impact their individual income taxes.



DOC to host blood drive on Feb. 25

Department of Corrections will host a blood drive in the Health Services Building parking lot on Fri., Feb. 25. The drive will be from 8 a.m. until 1 p.m. Contact Gina Rose at 564-6490 to make an appointment.

CHFS Health Tip of the Week: February is Heart Month - Take Care of your Heart!

By Anne Parr, R.N.

February is American Heart Month and time for thinking about things we can do to keep our hearts as healthy as possible such as:



1. Stop Smoking! - Your heart will thank you. Many people stop smoking on their own, and others quit with the help of a class or some of the stop smoking aids available. You can do it too!

2. Exercise every day. - Listed below are some ideas for fitting in 30 minutes of physical activity:

- ♥ Turn your breaks from work into recess or activity breaks. Walk the stairs or go for a walk outside.
- ♥ If pressed for time, walk 10 minutes 3 times a day.
- ♥ Take your dog for a walk.
- ♥ Dance!
- ♥ Go for a bicycle ride.
- ♥ Go skating with your kids.

However, if you have a history of heart disease, or have not been physically active in a while, contact your health care provider prior to beginning an exercise program.

3. Know your numbers. - Have your blood pressure checked, if you don't know your numbers. When your blood pressure is high, your heart has to work harder than it should to move blood to all parts of the body. To prevent high blood pressure:

- ♥ Aim for a healthy weight.
- ♥ Be active every day (see # 2 above).
- ♥ Use less salt and sodium in cooking.
- ♥ Cut back on alcohol.

4. Keep your blood cholesterol level in check by:

- ♥ Eating heart healthy foods to help lower cholesterol.
- ♥ Consuming meals low in cholesterol and fat
- ♥ Adding foods high in fiber to your diet.

5. Cut back on alcohol - Check with your physician to determine what amount, if any, is safe for you to consume.

6. Maintain a healthy weight by:

- ♥ Loosing weight slowly - no more than one pound a week.
- ♥ Learning to read food labels.
- ♥ Cutting back on foods high in fats and calories.
- ♥ Eating smaller portions.
- ♥ Choosing fruits and vegetables for snacks.
- ♥ Baking, broiling or boiling foods, and avoiding rich sauces.

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Governor Ernie Fletcher funds Expanded Newborn Screening Program

New tests will save lives

Governor Ernie Fletcher announced on Feb. 1 that he will provide funding in the budget to expand Kentucky's newborn screening program to the national standard set by the March of Dimes and the Department of Health and Human Services.



Appearing before a March of Dimes gathering at the Capitol Rotunda, Governor Fletcher said the funding will allow Kentucky to screen for 29 different disorders - 28 metabolic blood disorders as well as the universal hearing exam. Currently Kentucky stands as one of only five states to test its newborns for only four blood conditions.

"As a physician, I have seen first-hand the importance of newborn screenings. These conditions are treatable if we catch them early, but are very serious if allowed to progress," Governor Fletcher said. "It is the right thing to do - and the smart thing to do - for the next generation of Kentuckians."

Senator Julie Denton is sponsoring companion legislation to make this funding permanent. "I have been working on this issue for years, and it's so encouraging to have a Governor who shares my commitment for getting this accomplished," said Senator Denton.

Katrina Adams-Thompson, Director of Program Services for Kentucky March of Dimes, applauded Governor Fletcher's action, saying, "On behalf of all our newborn babies, the March of Dimes is so pleased with Governor Fletcher's leadership in helping this lifesaving initiative become a reality."

New technology known as Tandem Mass Spectrometry has enabled physicians to increase the number of metabolic conditions for which newborns can be screened. Early detection, diagnosis and treatment of children with these metabolic conditions may prevent a child's serious illness, disability, or even death. Thirty-eight states have expanded their programs through this new technology.

The expansion will cost an estimated \$3.1 million this year. These monies will come from a variety of sources, including Tobacco Settlement funds and adjusted hospital fees. Additional General Fund dollars and fees will continue to contribute to the program. Earlier detection and treatment of these disorders, however, is expected to save the Commonwealth millions of dollars in neonatal care

costs. More importantly, these tests will save countless lives of children.

It is estimated that up to 5 percent of childhood deaths attributed to sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) may have actually been caused by a treatable metabolic condition. Over two years (2001-2002), Kentucky lost 76 infants to SIDS.

Additionally, Governor Fletcher's plan calls for the Department for Public Health (DPH) to continue consulting with experts from the state's Newborn Screening Advisory Committee as it purchases the necessary equipment, recruits and trains public health staff, and educates hospital staff, physicians and the public about the expansion. DPH will continue to partner with the state's university medical centers to ensure definitive diagnosis, treatment and case management.

In September 2004, advisers to HHS Secretary Tommy Thompson endorsed a study from the American College of Medical Genetics that called for each state to expand its screening for genetic disorders among newborns. The March of Dimes agreed with this recommendation and established it as the group's national standard. Kentucky will conduct the 28 metabolic blood tests currently recommended and continue its universal newborn hearing screening program.

Governor Fletcher urges employees to submit efficiency ideas

Enhancements make Employee Suggestion System more user-friendly



Kentucky Employee Suggestion System

State government employees can now use a new internet-based system to submit suggestions on making state government more efficient, thanks to the newly-launched Employee Suggestion System Web site.

The newly enhanced system puts Kentucky on top in recognizing and managing the ideas of employees.

"My administration continues its commitment to eliminate waste, fraud, abuse, and inefficiencies in state government," said Governor Ernie Fletcher. "Through the Employee Suggestion Systems, employees are able to play a role in making this happen by suggesting ways to increase efficiencies and save money. I encourage each and every state employee to use this system - a system which empowers employees to make a difference in state government."

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The Kentucky Employee Suggestion System is an incentive program designed to encourage merit employees to participate in good management by submitting their suggestions for implementation. Employees who suggest implemented ideas receive awards ranging from a minimum of \$100 to 10 percent of the first-year savings (\$2,500 maximum award.)

The Personnel Cabinet has partnered with IDMS, a Kentucky-based solutions development firm, to deliver a system that takes advantage of the best practices in the area of idea management. Together, they have revolutionized the concept of the traditional system to provide consistent submissions, approval and notification.

Employees can now submit their suggestions at the moment their idea occurs by utilizing a new on-line form, available 24/7. The form is simple, user-friendly, and fast. Employees receive immediate confirmation and will be able to track their suggestion.

"The Employee Suggestion System has successfully saved the Commonwealth millions of dollars since its implementation," said Personnel Cabinet Secretary Erwin Roberts. "With the enhanced system, we hope more state employees will participate in the program, resulting in more efficiency in state government, and in addition, more rewards for more employees whose ideas are selected."

Last December, 28 state employees were recognized for their implemented suggestions - suggestions that amounted to a savings of more than \$760,000. The five-year life savings from last year's suggestions alone will amount to more than \$3.8 million in savings.

The Kentucky Employee Suggestion System was implemented in 1981. The first-year savings recognized since the system's establishment is more than \$26 million.

Employees can access the site at <http://personnel.ky.gov>.

Frankfort: On the Move!

Marla Montel, Commissioner of the Dept. for Human Support Services (DHSS) and Bill Cooper, Director of the Division of Aging Services, share a laugh during the DHSS pizza party Feb. 3 to celebrate The Big Move which has helped move previously separated and far-flung department offices to a more centralized location. Montel said the move has made department operations more efficient and "it's already



helped staff get to know and work with each other better." Most who attended the celebration said the move has gone very well for them, and many commended the advance planning and organization as well as the moving staff for making a big project go smoothly.

Nominations accepted for Governor's Awards for Outstanding Volunteer Service

Nominations are now being accepted for the annual Governor's Awards for Outstanding Volunteer Service, sponsored by Governor Ernie Fletcher and the Kentucky Commission on Community Volunteerism and Service (KCCVS) in CHFS. The deadline for nominations is Feb. 15. Awards will be presented at a ceremony during National Volunteer Week, April 17 - 23, at the Capitol Rotunda in Frankfort.

Nomination forms are available at all public libraries and online on the KCCVS website <http://chfs.ky.gov/dhss/kccvs>. The Web site also contains more detailed information about the awards and nomination criteria.

Nomination forms can be mailed or delivered to the KCCVS office at 275 East Main Street, Mail Stop 3C-A, Frankfort, KY 40621.

Employee Enrichment

By Anya Armes Weber



Employee Enrichment is a weekly feature for CHFS staff. These tips for making work better will focus on team building, customer service and personal development.

Taking a "health break" away from your desk each day can be good for your heart and your work. A 15-minute walk can get your blood pumping and clear your head. Even a walk down and up the stairs to pick up a healthy snack is a good start. You'll have a boost of energy when you return to your desk.

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